



Census 2010/Cochise County Counts Complete Count Committee

Meeting Summary: May 20, 2010

Attendees: Supervisor Ann English, Cochise County; Jim Vlahovich, Deputy County Administrator; Wayne Wilson, ADC; Jon Belair, Fort Huachuca; Amy Sunseri, Ft. Huachuca Scout

Census Partners: Angel Rocha and Tom McAlpin

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Supervisor Ann English opened the meeting and thanked the members, especially those that have been regular attendees, for their participation. She then noted that the efforts of this committee were largely responsible for the excellent response rate that the County had during the first phase of the Census 2010 outreach. All the pieces seemed to be coming together thanks to the hard work of the Complete Count Committee.

CENSUS 2010 ONGOING BRIEFING

Karen Lamberton, Cochise County Transportation Planner, announced that due to the Census counts, Arizona would definitely be gaining one more seat in Congress! She stated that due to increased population in the Sierra Vista metropolitan area, there will also be changes in supervisor district boundaries; primarily closing in around the metro Sierra Vista area.

She went on to state that we have the highest participation rate for a rural border county with Mexico in the nation... Cochise County increased our response rate by 8 percent AND is the third highest border county in the nation with only San Diego County and Pima County, both considered more urban counties, at 70 and 71 percent higher.

Lamberton described various successes we have had in spreading the Census message. The Complete Count Committee meetings were attended by different small groups which was expected and actually worked very well for a multi-phased activity where you need different kinds of support at different points in the process. Everyone that attended (even one meeting) went away and reported back that they had accomplished at least one thing in behalf of the Census. Cochise County employees did a great job leveraging Census information through both personal contacts and on a larger scale by including census information in mailings and/or distribution at events or within the scope of their regular work activities.

Census in the Schools and the Faith-based outreach were true partnerships with the Bureau – we connected them to contacts and the School Superintendents office directly linked our charter and home school contacts to Census materials.

Lamberton then pointed out that our focus will now change due to the current shift in the Census Bureau from partnership to operations. There are things that the Bureau can no longer share with the County or have time for the political process to work with; for example, specific household compliance/denial versus census tract level low response rates. This has an effect on our final strategy phase as the Bureau has recently decided to pull all Be Counted forms off the street rather than flood the streets (as in 2000 census phases). Cochise County worked with a few neighborhood events that were already planned and pulled this effort up into last month/early May in hopes of getting these forms out into the community fast enough. The group discussed how effective a neighborhood event would be right now and the general consensus was that they would not gain what we needed right now; although if a specific area seems to be having trouble during the non-response phase a targeted event might be helpful in that area.

FINAL STRATEGIES

The group discussed what kinds of activities might be helpful during the next few months and decided to target the following activities:

- Message, either email or paycheck insert to county employees regarding problems regarding duplicate forms, enumerator visits, etc.
- Send same message major employers to share with their employees.
- Distribute left over promotional materials to local schools.
- Continue to hand out Be Counted forms but provide information to the residents that they may be contacted by the Census Bureau after they mailed these kinds of forms in (rather give every opportunity for people to send forms in then risk them being completely missed because of their rural locations/difficulties in reaching household residents at home).
- Give lawn sign frames to elections department.

QUESTIONS & FUTURE ITEMS

The next meeting date will be June 17, 2010. This will be the final meeting and will be focused on de-briefing our 2010 effort and pre-planning for our 2020 effort. It was noted that everyone's schedule is very busy so it was suggested that comments and recommendations could also be submitted by mail, e-mail or phone in advance of the June meeting. (Submit to Rita Bryan at rbryan@cochise.az.gov or Karen Lamberton at klamberton@cochise.az.gov)

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at about 3:30 p.m. and attendees were encouraged to browse the lobby area where additional materials were displayed and to take away posters, handouts and give away items to use in their own outreach efforts.

www.cochise.az.gov/2010census & www.2010census.gov